

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 28414 01 OF 02 251623Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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O R 251613Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6535
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 28414

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MNUC, TECH, PK, FR, US, GW
SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEWS ON PAKISTAN REPROCESSING PLANT

REF: PARIS 28319

1. SUMMARY. I DISCUSSED WITH MFA SECRETARY GENERAL SOUTOU AUGUST 25 THE PUBLIC SURFACING OF THE FRENCH REFUSAL TO PROCEED WITH THE RE-PROCESSING DEAL. SOUTOU SAID THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE PAKISTANIS UNDERSTAND THAT THE FRENCH WILL MAKE NO FURTHER DELIVERIES FOR THE PLANT. SOUTOU REAFFIRMED SEVERAL DAYS AGO TO THE PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR THAT THE MEANING OF THE GISCARD LETTER TO ZIA WAS: NO TO THE REPROCESSING PLANT. THE PAKISTANIS HAVE GIVEN THE FRENCH NO REACTION TO THE GISCARD LETTER OTHER THAN ZIA'S PUBLIC COMMENTS. THE FRENCH BELIEVE THAT PAKISTAN WILL TRY TO LIMIT THE DAMAGE TO THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP AND WILL THEREFORE NOT RETALIATE AGAINST FRANCE IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE. SOUTOU EXPECTS THE NEXT STEP TO BE A PRESENTATION BY PAKISTAN TO FRANCE OF A BILL FOR INDEMNIFICATION. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 PARIS 28414 01 OF 02 251623Z

2. I BEGAN BY NOTING THAT THE PRESS PLAY IN FRANCE HAD BEEN VERY FAVORABLE TO THE GOF (REFTEL). SOUTOU WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREED. SOUTOU THEN CHARACTERIZED ZIA'S LETTER TO GISCARD AS VERY TOUGH AND EVEN INSOLENT. HE SAID IT WAS LUCKY THE ORIGINAL HAD BEEN WRITTEN IN ENGLISH; IF IT HAD BEEN IN FRENCH, IT

WOULD HAVE PROVOKED A MUCH MORE NEGATIVE REACTION ON THE PART OF THE GOF.

3. SOUTOU THEN DESCRIBED GISCARD'S RESPONSE AS FOLLOWS. THE FRENCH ARE CONVINCED THAT PAKISTAN MUST PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE REGION AND WANT TO COOPERATE CLOSELY BILATERALLY. RELATIONS MUST BE BASED ON TRUST, BUT IN A NUCLEAR WORLD THAT'S NOT ENOUGH. THERE IS A NEED TO SUBMIT CERTAIN INTERESTS TO HIGHER CONSIDERATIONS. COMMERCIAL COMMITMENTS HAVE TO TAKE A BACKSEAT TO COMMITMENTS THAT AFFECT HUMANITY. SOUTOU SAID THAT THE RESPONSE WAS VERY CLEAR: THE FRENCH HAVE DECIDED TO TERMINATE THEIR EXPORTS FOR THE REPROCESSING PLANT. SOUTOU UNDERLINED THIS POINT IN A MEETING WITH THE PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR SEVERAL DAYS AGO.

4. SDUTOU SAID THAT SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO PAKISTANI

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 PARIS 28414 02 OF 02 251630Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 28414

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RESPONSE OTHER THAN ZIA'S REMARKS TO THE PRESS.
SOUTOU SEES ZIA'S PRIMARY INTEREST AS HAVING TO MAKE A RESPONSE FOR THE RECORD TO BHUTTO'S SUPPORTERS.
SOUTOU BELIEVES ZIA DOES NOT WANT TO ENVENOM BILATERAL RELATIONS AND TOOK COMFORT FROM THE FACT THAT ZIA DID NOT DIRECTLY ACCUSE FRANCE.

5. I THEN FILLED SOUTOU IN ON OUR CURRENT PERCEPTIONS. I NOTED THAT WE MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM WITH CONGRESS, IN THAT IT WAS LIKELY TO INSIST ON EVIDENCE THAT PAKISTAN WOULD NOT CONTINUE. SOUTOU NOTED WRYL THAT ZIA'S PRESS STATEMENT WASN'T MUCH HELP THERE. I ALSO SAID THAT AMBASSADOR HUMMEL'S RECENT TALK WITH SHAHNAWAZ (ISLAMABAD 8281) BUTTRESSED SOUTOU'S BELIEF THAT THE PAKS UNDERSTAND THAT THE FRENCH DECISION IS CLEAR AND FINAL.

6. I ASKED SOUTOU ABOUT NEXT STEPS. HE SAID THERE WAS A NEED TO BE PATIENT AND BUY TIME. HE EXPECTS THAT ZIA WILL PRESENT FRANCE WITH A BILL FOR INDEMNIFICATION (WHICH SOUTOU SAID HE HAD A PERFECT RIGHT TO DO). INTERESTINGLY, SOUTOU DID NOT REFER

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PAGE 02 PARIS 28414 02 OF 02 251630Z

TO ANY PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE US HELPING IN THIS REGARD. SOUTOU REPEATED THAT THE PAKISTANIS HAVE MADE NO THREATS. I ASKED WHETHER HE EXPECTED ANY ECONOMIC RETALIATION; HE REPLIED THAT THE PAKISTANIS SEEM TO WANT TO PRESERVE RELATIONS IN OTHER AREAS.

7. SOUTOU CONCLUDED BY MAKING THE GENERAL COMMENT, UNAMPLIFIED, THAT THERE WAS NOW A NEED TO HELP THE FRG TO BE MORE REASONABLE WITH REGARD TO BRAZIL. HARTMAN

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